

HeartBeat Ballarat & HeartBeat Ballarat Walking Group

Newsletter November-December 2025

What a wonderful year 2025 has been as we continue to promote Peer Support, Exercise and Social Connection.



WALKING

We have welcomed a number of new walkers during the past 12 months allowing us to maintain our four walks throughout the year.



- Tuesday 10:00 Indoor Walk at the Badminton Stadium. We have seen an increase in walkers through the year and now average around 35 walkers each session. We have appreciated the assistance of Rhonda, Neil and Sandy making tea and coffee available for us at the stadium. Big thanks to Bernie and Liz Brisbane for bringing in the bread and rolls each week that we all look forward to topping up our pantries.
- Wednesday 10:00 Lake Esmond. What a beautiful location this is for a walk. Offering a flat walk around the lake or the high track giving spectacular views across the lake. The birdlife and plants are always lovely to see as we walk. We have gained some new walkers during the year, and numbers are averaging around 30+ each week. Since the closure of the Eureka Café the change to Beechworth Bakery for tea and coffee after our walks has been successful.
- Friday 10:00 Botanic Gardens. Meeting outside and Pipers and walking in the sheltered gardens and up to the war memorials has remained popular. The walk is flat, and the displays provided by the botanic gardens staff are always amazing. The birdlife from Lake Wendouree, particularly our gorgeous black swans, is always a bonus. We have averaged 30+ walkers throughout the year. Tea and coffee were available at Pipers and in the latter part of the year we changed our coffee fix to the Lake View Hotel.
- Saturday 9:30 Victoria Park Walking Track. We have maintained around 12 walkers during the year. The walking is flat. One group does the shorter 2 Km walk while the other group does the full 5 Km each week. Tea or coffee is available at APCO for the short walk and Emma's for the 5Km walkers.
- Social Occasional Walks Several of these have been held during the year. A walk and picnic at Kirk's Reservoir and a walk followed by a pub lunch at Greendale. Several of our walkers have participated in three walks at Fawknor Park (opposite the Alfred Hospital) with the Baker Research Institute Heartbeat Walking Group followed by lunch with Heart Foundation Board Members.
- The 2nd Annual Memorial Walk was held at Victoria Park to reflect on those walkers who have passed away over the years. The walk was attended by 19 of our members this year.



**WALK
TALK COFFEE
REPEAT**

Heartbeat Ballarat proudly acknowledges the support received from Hon. Catherine King. We are proud recipients of an Australian Government Grant facilitated by Minister King. This newsletter printed with assistance from very helpful staff.



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PEER SUPPORT

Our members have continued to provide peer support to those who are in need.

- We have a regular group who have a lived experience with heart trauma speak to heart patients in rehab programs after major heart surgery. Many of these patients join our walking programs.
- Dinner meetings with guest speakers to educate us on heart and lifestyle themes to help us live longer and better quality lives.
- Our members do home and hospital visits to people who are struggling with health and mental stress. The support they give our members is outstanding and assists with their peers getting back walking and connecting with their community.
- Some members provide transport to and from walks, medical appointments and occasionally shopping or provide home cooked meals.
- Our members also make a phone call or send a card to check on the welfare of peers who may be struggling.
- We wrapped our arms around and supported those who lost partners, family members and friends.

SOCIAL CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

- This is an essential aspect of peer support. During the year we have participated in a wide range of activities.
- Dinners and lunches each month to celebrate those having birthdays.
- Occasional afternoon and morning teas. Just for fun and companionship.
- Viewing films at the cinema, often followed by lunch.
- Attending shows as a group at Wendouree Performing Arts Centre, Civic Hall and the Piano Bar.
- Christmas in July at Ballarat Golf Club.
- Christmas Dinner Gala at The Grande Restaurant.
- Bus trips with Ballarat Ageing Well program.
- Five walkers sailed together on Disney Wonder cruise ship on a return trip from Melbourne to Hobart.

MAKING OUR ACTIVITIES SAFER AND HELPING US TO DEAL BETTER WITH SEVERE MEDICAL EVENTS, ILLNESSES AND ACCIDENTS WHILE WALKING OR AT OUR ACTIVITIES.

Ballarat Heartbeat currently own a well-stocked First Aid Backpack and a large defibrillator. These are bulky to carry so they are kept in a car at the location of a walk or activity. The Committee is currently investigating the purchase of a mobile one-off use defibrillator which is easily carried. This will be ideal to carry on our outdoor walks. Five of our members recently attended a training session on CPR and using a defibrillator. The membership fee you pay includes covering insurance with Heartbeat Victoria and providing items such as defibrillators, first aid kits, occasional venue and equipment hire and administration costs.



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2026 MEMBERSHIP FORMS and MEDICAL FORMS

Membership covers the period 1st January to 31st December in 2026. To be covered by insurance with Heartbeat Victoria walkers must complete a 2026 Membership Form and pay the membership fee of \$20.00. The Heartbeat Victoria Insurance only covers members on our registered walks. The Heartbeat Victoria insurance does not cover our social events.

You will be asked to complete an emergency medical information card that will slip in the back of your name badge. The card and its content will only be accessed in the case of an emergency to assist paramedics and doctors.

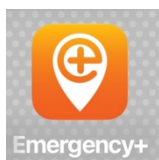


The new membership form also asks for emergency contacts and if you are a heart patient or care for a heart patient.

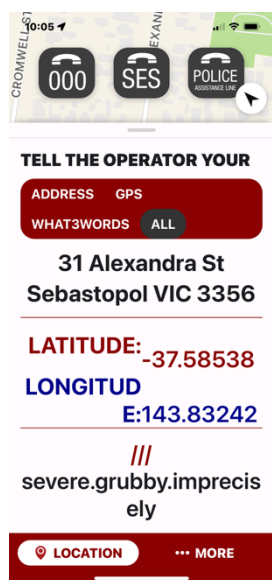
We use our FaceBook page **Heartbeat Ballarat & Heartbeat Ballarat Walking Group** to communicate information about our events and walks. There is a question on our new form about FaceBook to help us providing information to you.

A new membership form and medical card will be provided to you in January 2026.

An app we should all have on our smart phones



The “Emergency +” app is excellent when you must make an emergency call to 000 for help.



The app identifies your exact location within a 3-metre square using the address, latitude + longitude or 3 unique words. The developers have allocated 3 different words to every 3-metre square in Australia and its territories. This allows the 000 operators to direct emergency responders to the exact location of the emergency.

Perfect for informing 000 if you do not know the exact location of an emergency such as reporting a heart attack or fire. The three-word location works amazingly well. I tried Emergency + when I was recently on the remote Norfolk Island. It worked perfectly. It is available for Apple and Android phones.

Responder is another app that alerts registered people who have access to a defibrillator (*and are trained to use it*) and directs them to a cardiac event. Often the responders arrive before an ambulance and commence CPR and defib if required.

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Change of Venue for Saturday Walk 6th December.

Victoria park is not available due to the Spilt Milk Concert. The walk will instead be conducted at 9:30 in Eureka Park followed by a cuppa at the café in the Eureka Centre.



RSVP with payment by 25th November.
Write your name on the list in the Blue Activities Book or contact Lyn Webb
0410 335 285.



Dates of Walks during December and January

The last 2025 indoor walk is Tuesday December 16th. Badminton Stadium will reopen for indoor walks mid-January 2026.

Outdoor walks at Paul's Wetlands, 346 Dowling Street will be held on

Tues Dec 23 10am

Tues Dec 30th 10am

Tues Jan 6th 10am

Tues Jan 13th not confirmed

Need more info see Walk Leaders in red vests at any walk.

The outdoor walks at Lake Esmond, Botanic Gardens and Victoria will continue as usual over the Christmas New Year break for those who wish to attend.



Heartbeat Ballarat & Heartbeat Ballarat Walking Group would like to thank all its members for their support and participation in our walks, peer support and social connection throughout 2025. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and New Year and look forward to you joining us again in 2026.

New Thursday Indoor Walk at Delacome Town Centre is coming in the New Year.